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THREE AND OUT

Chancellor Vitter’s short time on campus has been defined by a public struggle with the university’s image.

SLADE RAND
DMEDITOR@GMAIL.COM

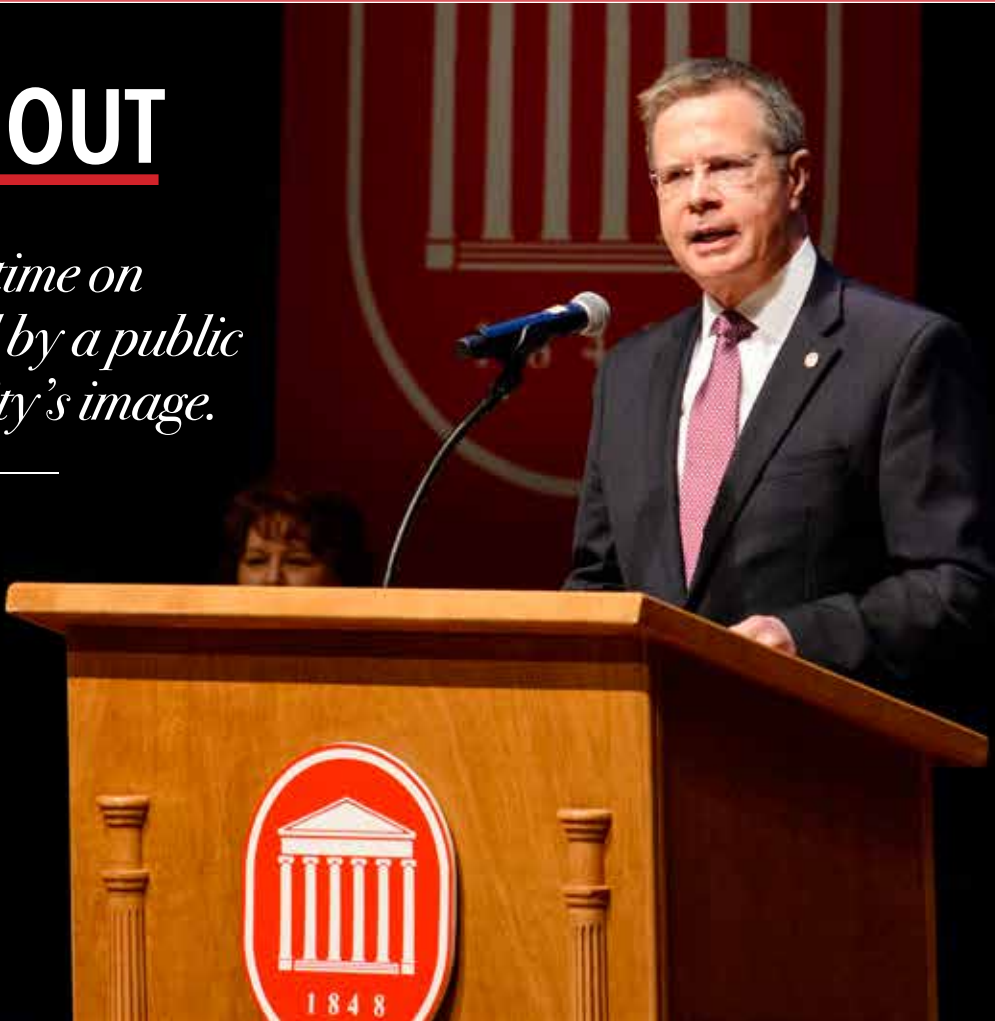


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: CHRISTIAN JOHNSON

An era that was ushered in by a Sugar Bowl victory and a Carnegie academic research honor came to a close on Friday with the state education board’s announcement that Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter will step down from his position in January 2019. Vitter will resign as the shortest-tenured Ole Miss chancellor since George Holmes retired from his position as the first head of school in 1849, a year after the university’s founding.

Vitter’s time at the university is often classified as one of change. Beyond the multi-million dollar construction projects and physical additions to the university’s landscape he presided over, Vitter led the school through a time of cultural transition.

In the three years since Vitter became head of the school, the university has added two new dormitories and a modern basketball arena. It welcomed both a new mascot and head football coach, hired the first Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Community Engagement and installed six contextualization plaques for campus elements. Vitter, like many students who first stepped on campus four years ago, will depart from an Oxford campus different than the one he arrived on.

“I am gratified that we have grown dramatically in impact, stature and commitment in the past three years,” Vitter said in the IHL’s press release announcing his resignation. “We are stronger academically, enjoy more support in private giving and research funding, and engage more proactively with the world around us. In addition, we are a more diverse community with a more visible dedication to inclusion and civility.”

He adopted a university already on the path to change and oversaw the implementation of many initiatives that began years before he took the job.

On Oct. 26, 2015, three days before the Institutions of Higher Learning voted to unanimously approve Vitter as Ole Miss’ 17th chancellor, the university lowered the Mississippi state flag for the final time. The state flag’s removal came one week after heated school-wide debate ended in an 33-15 ASB senate vote in favor of removing the flag from campus. The culture of change had begun to take root on campus before Vitter was selected and it later came to dominate his tenure at Ole Miss.

Jarvis Benson, a senior at the university and president of the Black Student Union, said he learned patience through his four years of experiences with the chancellor and campus administration.

“I will remember this period (under Chancellor Vitter) as one of transition,” Benson said. “Chancellor Vitter’s entrance will be marked as

following the removal of the state flag. In the meantime, I will remember yearning for more monumental decisions to continue our progress on campus — a period where students continued to yearn.”

Though he said he’s proud of the progress he’s seen on campus, Benson views the changes such as the contextualization plaques and diversity programs as slow-coming, and likened them “to a band-aid... or perhaps a type of herbal medicine.”

“I am so proud of the addition of the office of the Vice-Chancellor for Diversity and Community Engagement. I am excited to see a black woman as the University’s General Counsel,” Benson said. “I see the Center for Inclusion and Cross-Cultural Engagement strengthening and expanding. However, the plaques in front of buildings named after white supremacists and the re-building of monuments glorifying the confederacy are a slap in the face. So, the changes that we want to see are slow — maybe working, but maybe not.”

Other Ole Miss community members have been disappointed with Vitter’s efforts in addressing Confederate symbols on campus, but for different reasons than those Benson cited.

A group created earlier this semester named “Stand Fast Ole Miss” has taken a vocal opposition to what its members see as Vitter’s progressive agenda when it comes to campus symbolism.

“Our goal is to bring Ole Miss back to a place where the Lyceum has as much regard and respect for defending conservative stances as it has demonstrated for more extreme liberal postures,” wrote Hayes Dent, the group’s founder. “Our Chancellor must be a strong arbiter of determining when the privileges of ‘academic freedom’ and ‘free speech’ are being abused to the detriment of our University.”

The chancellor’s decisions when it comes to wrangling in Ole Miss’ ever-changing identity have left students and alumni on either side of the ideological fold dismayed.

Vitter was the first university official to condemn the racist tone of a Facebook post made by prominent donor Ed Meek earlier this year. Vitter urged Meek to delete the post that was criticized for its racist and sexist implications, and the chancellor later advocated for the state IHL to approve the removal of Meek’s name from the university’s School of Journalism and New Media. The board voted to approve the name change at its October meeting in Jackson.

Also in October, Vitter wrote an op-ed to The Daily Mississippian in response to a report on the school’s racial climate published by four UM sociology professors. The report, titled “Microaggressions at the University of Mississippi,” analyzed more than 13,000 entries from Ole Miss students documenting bias related incidents in the university

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A word from DM columnists

Chancellor Vitter's resignation

Chancellor Vitter has announced his intent to resign after three years of mixed reactions from the university community. These six columnists have been students on this campus since Vitter's investiture to his departure.



WILL HALL
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In the three years since Chancellor Vitter took control of the leadership at our university, we have declined in various positive

metrics as well as witnessed our university become exceptionally divided.

A majority of conservatives have felt alienated by Vitter's leadership since the beginning, with his support of those who pushed to remove the flag of the state which pays his salary, encouraging the prohibition of the playing of Dixie at football games, further engaging our school in a public relations debacle with the selection of a new mascot through a show vote, and, lastly, instituting various overreaching programs sold on the pretext of advancing

diversity on campus which, in reality, sought to further consolidate power over a vocal majority which wanted Vitter's tenure to end.

Vitter may have been trying to pursue a third way at a University which finds itself hostile; however, he never appeared to master the ability to be all things for all people. He often humiliated our school with his nervous policy implementation and run-and-hide approach to criticisms leveled by both students and faculty. This is not to say that I have any doubts in Vitter's abilities as a man, a father,

a husband and a son; rather it's to say that the position of chancellor is not and never was the proper position for him to excel in.

Moving forward, it would be in the best interests of all students, faculty and alumni, regardless of their backgrounds and beliefs, to see the appointment of a chancellor that is Mississippi-made, tried and true, and understands what it means to an Ole Miss Rebel.

Will Hall is a senior journalism major from Atlanta.



BRANDON BROWN
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Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter announced his resignation as Chancellor of the University of Mississippi following a

very turbulent term in the position. There were many controversies surrounding Vitter, as there have been around the many chancellors before him. Even with that said, why would people celebrate the loss of a leader who has one of the most stellar resumes this university has ever seen?

Vitter has published over 300 books, compositions and journals for the field of computer science since he began his academic career. He was awarded tenure at age 29 in Brown University's computer science

department and went on to become the Provost at the University of Arkansas where he grew its academic faculty by over 60 personnel. Vitter earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Notre Dame, a master's degree in business administration from Duke University and finally his Ph.D at Stanford University.

I believe Vitter came to the university during turbulent times and that led people to blame him for many of them. A few Greek letter societies are under investigation or have been closed due to various issues not caused by

this chancellor. This, coupled with the many issues athletics has suffered, are all reasons enrollment is down and public outlook for the university isn't great. The university was indeed set for many setbacks before his arrival. In light of this, we should be grateful he'll stay on as faculty. I look forward to seeing what the engineering and computer science departments will achieve while he's part of the Ole Miss family.

Brandon Brown is a senior psychology major from Laurel.



ALLEN COON
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It's déjà vu.
On March 20, 2015, the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL), the state governing body overseeing the administration of Mississippi's public universities, announced

that UM Chancellor Dan Jones' contract would not be renewed. Jones' tenure oversaw increased student enrollment, unprecedented private investment, and the institutionalization of inclusivity and racial reconciliation, but the IHL only later cited concerns regarding management of the University of Mississippi Medical Center as its justification.

Within a week of the announcement, a diverse collective of students organized Students for Chancellor Jones, and on March 25, approximately 2,000 students, faculty, staff and alumni crowded the Circle to

demand Jones' reinstatement. Despite statewide support, contract renegotiations were unsuccessful.

Still, students sought transparency and to actively participate in the chancellor replacement process. Yet the IHL-appointed Campus Search Advisory Committee included only a single student representative, then-ASB President Rod Bridges. We were told community input would be decisive, that candidates would be submitted to community debate, but candidate interviews began Oct. 13, and after only a week of private sessions, Jeff Vitter was selected as the IHL's

"preferred candidate" on Oct. 19, later to be appointed chancellor on Oct. 29, 2015.

Now, after Vitter's resignation on Friday, we are again without a chancellor, again without public justification of why or what or how. Students must now decide: is this our university, or the IHL's? Disclaimer: In 2015, Allen Coon served as Communications Director for Students for Chancellor Jones.

Allen Coon is a senior public policy leadership, African-American studies, and sociology triple major from Petal.

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Letters should be typed, double-spaced and no longer than 300 words. Letters may be edited for clarity, space or libel. Third-party letters and those bearing pseudonyms, pen names or "name withheld" will not be published. Publication is limited to one letter per individual per calendar month.

Letters should include phone and email contact information so that editors can verify authenticity. Letters from students should include grade classification and major; letters from faculty and staff should include title and the college, school or department where the person is employed.



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MEMBER NEWSPAPER



LEVI BEVIS
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On Nov. 9, our university received news that Chancellor Vitter had announced his

resignation. As our university moves into a period of administrative transition, it is important to reflect on his tenure.

Serving as the chancellor of any university is a difficult job. Yet, serving as the chancellor of the University of Mississippi is arguably one of the most difficult roles in higher education. On top of overseeing one of the fastest growing universities, university leadership must juggle our university's often dark history, current interests,

and future considerations to ensure students' success. These demands are not easy to navigate, but Chancellor Vitter promoted progress in each area.

The university's academics thrived under Chancellor Vitter's leadership. He pushed for more academic opportunities through initiatives such as the annual UM Tech Summit and new building construction. He also expanded service opportunities into three neighboring communities

through the MPartner program.

On the social side, Chancellor Vitter's role was controversial. He oversaw the installation of contextualization plaques on campus, which is an important first step of many steps needed to recognize the university's often overlooked history. He also advocated for the removal of Ed Meek's name from the School of Journalism and New Media. While some of his responses to campus issues were lacking

to say the very least, we as a community must recognize that progress is a marathon, not a sprint. Small steps forward are still steps forward.

I had the honor of getting to know Chancellor Vitter and his wife well over the past few years. Though I do not agree with all of their campus decisions, I deeply respect their work and commitment to better our university.

Levi Bevis is senior public policy leadership major from Florence, Alabama.



JAZ BRISACK
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In order to understand UM's chancellor drama, let's

follow the money.

In "Democracy In Chains," Nancy MacLean alludes to the coup that removed former chancellor Dan Jones from office and installed Jeff Vitter in his place. Jones had been an advocate for Medicaid expansion, a stance that did not endear him to health insurance lawyer and Institutions of Higher Learning trustee Alan Perry, who helped choose Vitter.

The new chancellor avoided activism. Asked

to speak at a ceremony dedicating a new scholarship for women in law school, Vitter instead devoted his remarks to a discussion of the building's chandeliers.

However, he managed to ingratiate himself with certain reactionary elements, including the billionaire Fred Smith of FedEx, a notorious union-buster. Vitter pressured the Honors College to make Smith the Fall 2017 convocation speaker.

Vitter also curried favor

with the Our State Flag Foundation, a group dedicated to promoting the white supremacist Mississippi state flag on campus — although many of its staunchest supporters are not students. When this group called for Vitter to condemn a progressive professor's tweet, he quickly complied. However, Vitter remained dismissive of the UM Race Diary Project, instead celebrating a contextualization process that

has still failed to remove even the most heinous names and symbols from campus.

And yet, at bottom, this issue is much deeper than the career of one individual. Vitter has not been executing his own agenda, but the IHL's. As he prepares to exit, the IHL prepares to choose his successor.

Let's hope they don't give us somebody worse.

Jaz Brisack is a senior journalism major from Oxford.



JACOB GAMBRELL
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As I reflect on Chancellor Vitter's tenure at the

University of Mississippi, the central themes that emerge are passivity and temperance. Jeff Vitter is the embodiment of the morally vacuous centrism that both those on the center-left and center-right yearn wistfully for in our hyper-polarized political milieu. However, as Chancellor Vitter has shown, you cannot be an effective leader by straddling a fence.

Our university is a physical

manifestation of the tension between the forms of the past and the future. While other southern universities can ignore their relationship with slavery, segregation and white supremacy, we, as students and fans of the Ole Miss Rebels, must navigate this crossroads every single day. I welcome this great responsibility to set the standard for other southern universities to follow. One cannot plead ignorance nor embrace indifference as he

or she walks to class passing statues that glorify the mid-19th century struggle to maintain white supremacy and the mid-20th century struggle to dismantle it. On this campus, even being passively apolitical is still taking a stance.

Chancellor Vitter had the misfortune of being disliked by a majority of both the conservative students and donors for doing too much and by the progressive students and

activists for doing too little. He tried to be all things to all people and ended up being nothing but a hollow "wrist-bump of both sides-ism." I hope that the IHL will select a new chancellor who, with strength, courage and moral fortitude, will unapologetically lead us into the 2020s and beyond.

Jacob Gambrell is a senior international studies major from Chattanooga, Tennessee.



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A LOOK AT VITTER'S LEGACY

Important moments from the chancellor's three years at Ole Miss

JAN. 29, 2016

Ole Miss received a Notice of Allegations from the NCAA's enforcement staff alleging roughly 30 violations.

SEPT. 23, 2016

Students flooded the Lyceum halls for "Occupy the Lyceum" on Sept. 23, 2016, to protest the university's lack of reaction to a racist Facebook comment posted by an Ole Miss business student.

NOV. 10, 2016

Vitter's investiture ceremony took place on Nov. 10, 2016. "I am privileged to be your partner in building a vibrant Mississippi through higher education," Vitter said during the ceremony.



FILE PHOTO: CAMERON BROOKS

JULY 20, 2017

Hugh Freeze resigned on July 20, 2017, after a lawsuit by Houston Nutt prompted the university to hand over phone records from six days in January 2016, and a phone call to an alleged escort service was found. Vitter commented on the resignation, saying the university found "a pattern of personal misconduct inconsistent with the standards expected from the leader of our football team."



FILE PHOTO: ARIEL COBBERT

OCT. 2, 2017

The student body voted to replace the Rebel the Black Bear mascot with the Landshark. On August 20, 2018, Ole Miss Athletics unveiled Tony the Landshark, named for former Ole Miss football player and veteran, Tony Fein.



FILE PHOTO: CHRISTIAN JOHNSON

MARCH 2, 2018

Vitter announced the formation of the Chancellor's Advisory Committee for History and Context (CACHC) on March 29, 2016. The committee's final report, including plans for the creation of six contextualization plaques, was released on July 6, 2017. The contextualization plaques were unveiled on campus during a ceremony on March 2, 2018. "These plaques are daily reminders of our obligation to learn from the past and commit to an inclusive future," Vitter said.

SEPT. 19, 2018

UM donor and namesake of the Meek School of Journalism & New Media, Ed Meek, made a post that garnered criticism from the chancellor, students and the community. Vitter posted a statement to Facebook, saying "While we all want to ensure a safe, family-friendly environment at the university and in Oxford, I must condemn the tone and content of Ed Meek's post from earlier today. The photos in his post suggest an unjustified racial overtone that is highly offensive. Ed, I urge you to withdraw your comment and apologize to anyone offended."



FILE PHOTO: CHRISTIAN JOHNSON

NOV. 9, 2018

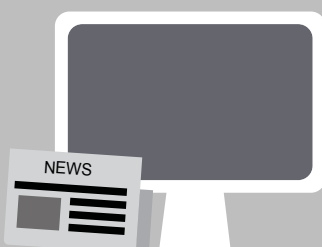
Ole Miss Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter announced his resignation, according to a statement released by the state Institutions of Higher Learning.



FILE PHOTO: CAMERON BROOKS

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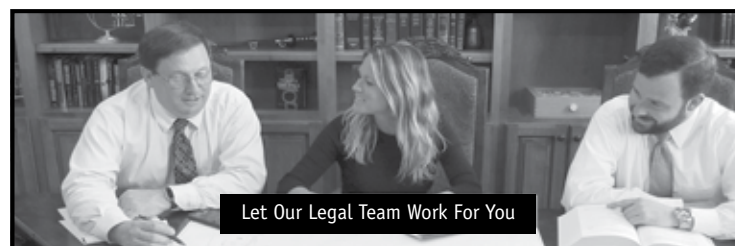
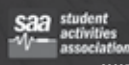


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VITTER

continued from page 1

community. In his response, Vitter questioned the protocol of soliciting such reports.

“I am disappointed by the fact that the report is silent on whether the research group helped the students who self-reported these incidents by referring them to local authorities or encouraging them to take advantage of resources available on our campus,” Vitter wrote in that op-ed.

Less than a week after the sociology professors published their report, Vitter used his personal Facebook page to condemn another social media post. Vitter never named the professor he sought to condemn, but the chancellor’s statement came the same day a post by Our Stage Flag Foundation called attention to a tweet posted by one of the UM Race Diary Project researchers calling for protesters to disrupt Republican senators’ meals and “put your whole damn fingers in their salads.”

“While I passionately support free speech, I condemn statements that encourage acts of aggression,” Vitter wrote, which many people took to be a condemnation of sociology professor James Thomas’ viral tweet.

Benson said he has noticed a disconnect between Vitter’s community efforts and the Ole Miss community itself. He said he doesn’t feel that the Chancellor “effectively addressed campus relations” unless something had gone viral on social media.

“The most disappointing example of (this disconnect) was



FILE PHOTO: CHRISTIAN JOHNSON

Elam Miller is a senior and the president of the Associated Student Body.

the Chancellor’s reaction to the UM Race Diary Project,” Benson said. “This study should have had huge impacts on administration’s look into campus race relations – things students face every day. However, his op-ed in the DM showed his passive feelings toward having these conversations.”

ASB President Elam Miller, a senior, has often worked with the Chancellor’s office since he joined the ASB Executive Branch in spring of 2017. As ASB president, Miller is scheduled to meet with the Chancellor once a month.

“Over the past three years I have seen our university make several strides in academics, such as becoming an R1 Research Institute, which I believe can be directly attributed to the work of Chancellor Vitter,” Miller said.

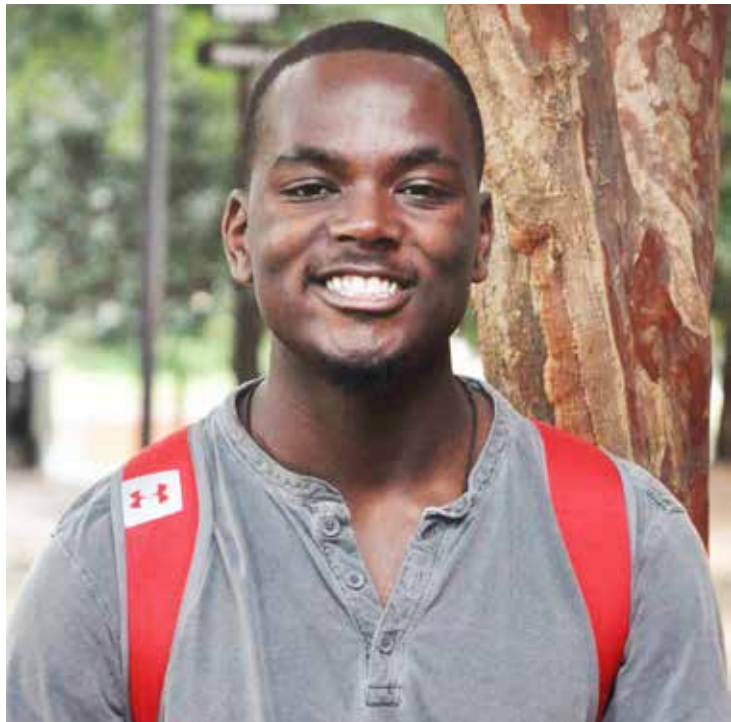
Miller said he remembers the

chancellor frequently asking the student body “... to desire more, to give more, to be more and to leave more behind.” He said the university has more work to do to complete the goals Vitter laid out in his Flagship Forward Strategic Plan, but that his plan has provided a foundation for progress.

“While Chancellor Vitter has chosen to return to faculty, I challenge the student body to hold true to the values of the UM Family and to demand meaningful participation in the selection of our next Chancellor,” Miller said.

Vitter will return to the classroom after Jan. 3, 2019, taking a tenured faculty position in the School of Engineering’s Department of Computer and Information Science.

“There is no more important role on a university campus than



FILE PHOTO: DEVNA BOSE

Jarvis Benson is a senior and the president of the Black Student Union.

as a faculty member,” Dr. Vitter said in an IHL press release.





Benson said Chancellor Vitter might not have achieved all he wanted to in his time on campus.

“I would like to believe that Chancellor Vitter wanted to make

sweeping changes to this campus. I wish I would have seen him be able to actually accomplish this.”

A university spokesman said on Friday that Vitter will not be entertaining requests for interviews at this time.

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Twitter reacts to announcement of Vitter’s resignation

DEVNA BOSE
DMMANAGING@GMAIL.COM

The IHL Board announced Jeffrey Vitter’s intent to resign as Ole Miss Chancellor on Friday morning. Vitter will serve as chancellor of the university until Jan. 3, 2019, and continue as a tenured Distinguished Professor in the School of Engineering’s Department of Computer and Information Science.

“It has been an extraordinary honor and privilege to serve as the

leader of the University of Mississippi during a time of great progress and accomplishment,” Vitter said.

The IHL release states that an interim chancellor will be named soon. The Ole Miss community quickly took to social media in response to the announcement of Vitter’s resignation.



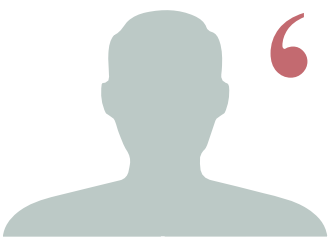
Second consecutive failure of the Mississippi IHL for Oxford and @OleMissRebels. The removal of Dan Jones followed by the installation of Jeff Vitter. Get the @UMchancellor position correct...we deserve better than this consistent ineptitude.”

@kelly_english
11/9/18, 11:02 AM



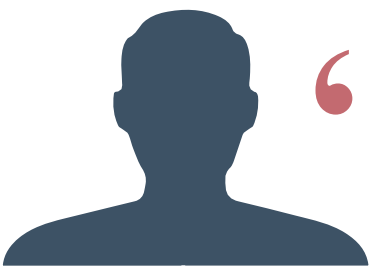
Who thinks we can get a great Chancellor at Ole Miss now that the champion of POLITICAL CORRECTNESS Jeffrey Vitter (David’s brother) has resigned? Our Governor, Phil Bryant, has appointed all the members of the Board of Institutions of Higher Learning, so we’ll see.”

@dougspeights
11/9/18, 11:56 AM



Hate to see anyone lose their job but Vitter needed to go. Big move for Ole Miss that has to happen. #HottyToddy.”

@matt_noz
11/9/18, 11:07 AM



It is one hell of an honor to have Dr. Jeff Vitter’s signature on my diploma as @UMchancellor.”

@seth_dickinson
11/9/18, 11:50 AM

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Students share thoughts about Vitter’s resignation

GRACE MARION
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Ole Miss Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter announced his plans to resign from his position as chancellor and instead become a tenured professor in the computer science department after January. Ole Miss students had varied responses to the announcement and the legacy that Vitter leaves behind. Vitter, the 17th chancellor of the university, has presided over some of the university’s most troubling times in recent history. His resignation comes at the end of a period when student enrollment has decreased for two consecutive years, former Ole Miss head football coach Hugh Freeze resigned and the university was under investigation by the NCAA. Earlier this year, the university attracted national attention for the racist tone of a Facebook post made by a prominent donor. Vitter’s



Chancellor Vitter takes a selfie with a student in front of the Union during Welcome week in 2016.

FILE PHOTO: ARIEL COBBERT

responses to these controversies, along with others from through-

out his three years, seem to have left students with the opinion that the chancellor took a risk-free approach to his position.

Graduate history major Tom Porter said he didn’t understand the timing of Vitter’s resignation and found himself asking “Why now?”

“I feel like I’m standing on uneven ground,” Porter said on Friday.

Porter said he was not satisfied with Vitter as chancellor because of his inability to address issues of race on campus, and he just had an interest in “finding money for STEM projects.”

“It just never felt like he had an active interest to make the campus an inclusive place,” Porter said.

Freshman international studies and Spanish major Reed Peets said he thinks Vitter’s resignation is interesting because there had been previous rumors that his contract wasn’t going to be renewed.

“I mean that must mean that there’s something pretty significant that the university was not happy about,” Peets said.

Senior biology major Grady Fisher said he doesn’t care very much about Vitter resigning.

“As long as the next guy doesn’t destroy the university, do what you want,” Fisher said. “They’re going to take my money whatever I do, so who cares who’s running (the university).”

Sophomore journalism major Austin Parker said he doesn’t think Vitter has done much for the university.

“He’s been very neutral and on the fence about things,” Parker said. “He’s been very risk free, so to have someone who is able to take the risk and do something bold as the new chancellor will be really exciting for our school.”

Junior journalism major Morgan Buompastore wasn’t surprised that Vitter resigned on Friday but said it happened sooner than she expected.

“He wasn’t really doing much about changing the university,” Buompastore said.

Junior English education major Jennier Cato said she thinks this is one of the biggest announcements of the year, and she hopes “whoever fills (Vitter’s) position is super qualified.”

Vitter’s resignation marks the second chancellor in a row to resign under unclear terms. The state college board made the controversial decision not to renew former Ole Miss Chancellor Dan Jones’ contract in 2015.

According to a statement from the state college board, an interim chancellor will be named soon.

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ACROSS

1 Indonesian resort island

5 Reduce gradually

10 How sweet ___!

14 Environmental sci.

15 Accustom

16 Marquand sleuth

17 Indian princess

18 Twangy, as a voice

19 Feminist Lucretia

20 Muchness

22 Grain stores

23 Person of action

24 Merit

26 SAT takers

29 Pressing need

31 Midday nap

35 Pertaining to punishment

37 Low in pitch

39 Christmas

40 Affirm

41 Saturn's largest moon

42 Crime boss

43 Repentant one

44 Sign of injury

45 Eagle's home

46 Sister of Venus

48 Old Fords

50 '60s campus gp.

51 Gillette brand

53 Wild ones are sown

55 Gift of the Magi

58 Shellfish which cling to ships

63 I could ___ horse!

64 Museum artifact

65 "The Clan of the Cave Bear" heroine

66 Shake ___ (hurry)

67 Aquarium buildup

68 Lustful look

69 ___ majesty

70 Uncultivated country

71 On a cruise

DOWN

1 Floe

2 Rent-___

3 The ___ Ranger rode a horse called Silver

4 Troy story

5 Two fins

6 Absence of oxygen

7 Cat

8 Clear the board

9 Seminary subj.

10 Nearness

11 Kit item

12 Sock ___ me!

13 Drunkards

21 Work like a dog

22 ___ Lanka

25 Org.

26 Fights

27 Variety show

28 Twisted expression?

30 Pertaining to birth

32 Flies high

33 Lukewarm

34 Healing plants

36 The amount overdue

38 Pertaining to, for one

41 Nicholas II, for one

45 "The Thin Man"

pooch

47 To the ___ degree

49 Moved rhythmically

52 White poplar

54 Milan's La ___

55 Kind of ticket

56 Ivy League school

57 AAA suggestions

59 Pond organism

60 Caustic substances

61 Waiting for the Robert ___

62 Franklin D.'s mother

64 Uncooked

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Crossword puzzle provided by BestCrosswords.com (www.bestcrosswords.com). Used with permission.

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Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 with no repeats.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL

CHALLENGING

7	2	6	3	5	8	4	1	9
1	4	3	7	6	9	2	5	8
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6	1	8	5	3	7	9	4	2
2	7	4	8	9	1	5	6	3
5	3	6	4	2	6	8	7	1
3	5	1	9	7	2	6	8	4
4	6	2	1	8	5	3	9	7
8	9	7	6	4	3	1	2	5

SAYING 'GOODTIE' TO CHANCELLOR VITTER

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THEDMFEATURES@GMAIL.COM

After hearing the news on Friday that the rumors were true and that Chancellor Vitter is resigning, I was conflicted. I knew that people on both sides of the political aisle who see him as enforcing too much or too little change would be happy to see him gone, and that people who are ready to finally settle down with a leader after recent and sudden changes in the Lyceum over the past five years would be upset. But for me — someone who values clothing above nearly everything else — Vitter’s resignation meant saying goodbye to a man who was bold enough to wear whatever he wanted and curated an extensive collection of neckties.

Vitter didn’t always make the right fashion choices. Sometimes they

were downright disastrous. I couldn’t help but shake my head when, on a visit to the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., Vitter wore black shoes with his seersucker suit. I nearly gasped every time I saw our fearless leader wearing an athletic blend Ole Miss polo underneath a sports coat.

But what Vitter lost in these blunders, he made up for in the vast array of neckwear he wore throughout his time as chancellor. To say goodbye, I’m looking back through the ties that Vitter wore as chancellor and highlighting some of the most memorable. These aren’t all good ties, but they’re all bold, for better or for worse.

THE BINARY TIE(S)

Although it’s not surprising given his computer science background, an interesting thing I found while researching this story is that Vitter actually owns at least two ties featuring various strings of binary code: one in white on blue and another in white on red.



PHOTO COURTESY: JEFF VITTER’S TWITTER



FILE COURTESY: ASSOCIATED PRESS



FILE PHOTO: DEVNA BOSE

THE PIANO KEY TIE

In the biggest social media moment of the past semester, high-profile donor Ed Meek made a widely criticized Facebook post, which Vitter in a Facebook comment said suggested “an unjustified racial overtone.” Somehow, Vitter woke up the morning after that controversy, put on this musically themed novelty tie and continued to wear it all day, even through his speech at the community forum.

THE ‘STARRY NIGHT’ TIE

Though Vitter’s own academic discipline is situated deep within STEM territory, this tie, featuring one of Vincent Van Gogh’s most famous paintings, shows that he was also able to appreciate the humanities.



PHOTO COURTESY: JEFF VITTER’S TWITTER

THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI TIE

A favorite when rubbing shoulders with political bigwigs (Vitter wore it on visits to both the state and national capitals), this tie emblazoned with miniature outlines of Mississippi made a lot of public appearances during Vitter’s time as chancellor.

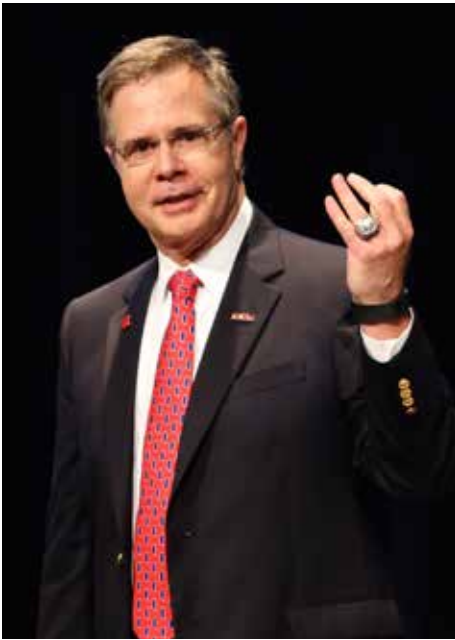


PHOTO COURTESY: JEFF VITTER’S TWITTER



PHOTO COURTESY: JEFF VITTER’S TWITTER

THE ‘@’ SYMBOL TIE

Although it’s less bold than his pair of binary ties, this tie consisting of a black-and-white pattern of ‘at’ symbols is another homage to Vitter’s computer science scholarship. It’s also notable that the ‘at’ symbol is how all Twitter handles start, including @UMchancellor, as Vitter used his social media accounts to do everything from interact with students to making official statements.



Vitter's tenure overshadowed by NCAA sanctions

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On Jan. 3, 2019, Jeffrey Vitter will step down as chancellor of the University of Mississippi, marking the end of his three-year tenure as the leader of Ole Miss. For many, he will be remembered as Ole Miss' chancellor during the school's long-fought battle with the NCAA and its Committee on Infractions.

Vitter's tenure as chancellor could easily be defined by the NCAA's case against Ole Miss. The Committee on Infractions issued its first Notice of Allegations against the university just 20 days after he took office, with the final verdict in the case coming only days before the announcement of his resignation.

Vitter officially took office as the University of Mississippi's chancellor on Jan. 1, 2016, almost four years after the NCAA investigation into Ole Miss Athletics began. However, just three weeks into his tenure on Jan. 22, the university received the first Notice

of Allegations from the NCAA Committee on Infractions, alleging violations in women's basketball, track & field and football.

Following a 30-day extension to Ole Miss' original 90-day response window, Chancellor Vitter and athletics director Ross Bjork released the university's response to the COI's Notice of Allegations, along with a statement addressed to the "Ole Miss Family."

In the statement, Vitter and Bjork admit to violations within the athletic department, but contend the severity of those violations.

"Serious violations have occurred," the statement read. "For 27 of the 28 allegations, we agree that a violation of the NCAA rules occurred; however, for several of those allegations we do not agree on all of the facts."

In addition to contending the



FILE PHOTO: BILLY SCHUERMAN
Chancellor Jeffrey Vitter expresses his grievances with the additional sanctions laid out by the COI in 2017.

severity of select violations, Vitter and Bjork's statement announced that the university would be self-imposing sanctions in line with the usual punishment for such violations.

"In response to these violations, we have taken several corrective actions and we have self-imposed significant penalties," the statement read. "We based our self-imposed penalties on the COI's decisions in other cases and the NCAA penalty matrix released in 2012."

In October 2016, the NCAA's case against Ole Miss women's basketball and track & field came to a close with no additional action being taken against either program.

"We regret the violations of NCAA bylaws in both programs and have taken several steps to prevent future violations," Vitter said.

Following the conclusion of the women's basketball and track & field case, the Committee on Infractions sent Ole Miss an updated Notice of Allegations focusing solely on the football program. The updated notice outlined eight new violations, in addition to the 13 in the first notice.

On Feb. 22, 2017, Vitter, Bjork and then-head football coach Hugh Freeze appeared in a prerecorded video addressing the Committee on Infractions' updated Notice of Allegations.

"We announce today that the NCAA enforcement staff's investigation of football has now concluded, and that earlier today, our outside legal counsel received the university's Notice of Allegations dealing with the football program," Vitter said. "Throughout the more than four-year investigation, the University of Mississippi has been committed

to seeking the truth."

During the video, Bjork announced that the university would be imposing more sanctions on itself, in hopes that it would ultimately soften the COI's final verdict.

"The university is self-imposing a one-year postseason ban on the football program for the 2017 season in addition to our previously announced self-imposed penalties," Bjork said. "The decision to add the postseason ban was a joint decision by Chancellor Vitter and myself and supported by Coach Freeze."

A short time later, on July 20, Vitter and Bjork held a press conference to announce Hugh Freeze's resignation as the head coach of Ole Miss Football. The administrators stressed that Freeze's resignation did not tie in with the NCAA's allegations against the football program, but rather with concerns of his personal conduct.

"In our analysis, we discovered a pattern of conduct that is not consistent with our expectations as the leader of our football program," Bjork said. "Chancellor Vitter and I spoke with coach Freeze last night. We discussed the entire situation. Coach Freeze was very transparent and admitted the conduct. Earlier this afternoon Chancellor Vitter and I met with coach Freeze again. He offered his resignation, and we accepted."

With Freeze's resignation, Matt Luke was named the interim head coach for the 2017 season.

In December 2017, the Committee on Infractions issued its final report on the Ole Miss case. The COI disagreed with Ole Miss' stance on the allegations, adding an additional year to the university's self-imposed 2017 postseason ban.

"We are deeply disappointed and angered by the additional penalty of a 2018 postseason ban," a university statement said.

"It is simply not warranted and is based on fundamental flaws in the NCAA case and how the investigation was conducted. We will vigorously appeal the additional postseason ban. It is clearly an excessive punishment, and we are outraged at the unfair characterization of our football program and the university culture involving athletics."

Two weeks later, Ole Miss submitted a notice to appeal the 2018 postseason ban and other penalties highlighted in the COI's final report to the NCAA's Infractions Appeals Committee.

"We have the best legal team in the country to handle our NCAA appeal," Vitter said. "We believe the additional penalties imposed by the COI are unwarranted, which we will make very clear at the appropriate time in our written submissions on the merits of our appeal."

November saw the final episode of Ole Miss' NCAA saga, when Ole Miss received the appeals committee's response to the university's appeal. The appeal upheld the 2018 postseason ban, but overturned other sanctions related to recruiting.

"While we are pleased by the (committees) finding that the COI abused its discretion with respect to the unofficial visit penalty, we remain disappointed by the remainder of the ruling, which upheld a 2018 postseason ban and findings of lack of institutional control and recruiting inducements," a university statement read, effectively ending the NCAA's case against Ole Miss.

Vitter's arrival in 2016 and the announcement of his resignation late in 2018 closely align with the timeline of the NCAA's case against Ole Miss' football program. The university has yet to release an official explanation of Vitter's departure, but the timing of his resignation and the timing of the conclusion of the case are eerily similar.

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Ole Miss offense’s lackluster performance results in loss

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COLLEGE STATION, Texas — Ole Miss lost a third-straight SEC game on Saturday, falling to Texas A&M 38-24. The Rebels are far removed from a 5-2 record after a comeback win over Arkansas, now sitting at a record of 5-5.

The flow of the game in College Station was eerily similar to last week’s, minus 22 total points. The Ole Miss offense was not perfect at any point, but big plays led to its 14 points. DaMarkus Lodge, A.J. Brown, Octavious Cooley and Elijah Moore made plays, but the Aggies’ coverage became an issue for the Rebels in the second half.

“They were not doing anything crazy,” Lodge said. “They were playing cover two to the boundary. They bracketed to the middle of the field. We just have to execute.”

The first half showed the teams’ differing offensive styles. The Aggies ran 40 plays from scrimmage, methodically moving the ball up and down the field. Their offense put up 199 yards for an average of about five yards-per-play. The Rebel defense limited the Trayveon Williams-led A&M rushing attack to 2.2 yards-per-carry. Mohamed Sanogo was once again the key cog for the Ole Miss



FILE PHOTO: CHRISTIAN JOHNSON

Running back Scottie Phillips looks for an opening during the game against Auburn earlier this season. Auburn won the game 31-16.

defense. He added nine tackles and a tackle-for-loss.

The Ole Miss offense found a rhythm toward the end of the first quarter. After failing to run the ball effectively at the start, the balance returned. Scottie Phillips left the game injured early, but his replacement stepped up. Woulard was able to move the sticks a few times, allowing Phil Longo to stay committed to the run. The big-play passing attack accounted for most of the offense. DaMarkus Lodge had two catches for more than 40 yards, and A.J. Brown added in a 39-yard catch-and-run.

The third quarter had a clear effect in the game. Ole Miss only possessed the ball for a limited 3:57 of game-time in the quarter, but the offense did not convert a first down. The only points in the quarter came from the defense.

On its first drive of the half, Trayveon Williams began to turn the first half’s short runs into big gains. The junior totaled 228 on the ground for the day, enough to take him over the 1,000-yard season mark for the second time

in his career.

The Aggies looked to take a 7-point lead deep in Ole Miss territory, but Kellen Mond fumbled on a quarterback run at the four-yard line. Zedrick Woods recovered it and returned it for a 96-yard scoop-and-score. The defense answered again on the next drive with an interception by Ken Webster. The spark needed to put distance between the Aggies and the Rebels was there, but the offense dropped the ball. Matt Luke acknowledged the strong

effort that his defense played with on Saturday.

“They are playing hard. They are giving it all they got,” Luke said. “Offensively, we have to find a way to stay on the field and help (the defense) out.”

Third-down efficiency, or lack thereof, held the offense back. The team successfully converted a third-down once out of 11 tries. The biggest failure to convert came in the third quarter when Brown and Ta’amu had connected for 14 yards and a first down.

However, the play was negated by targeting call that stemmed from a blindside block from Dawson Knox. Not only did Ole Miss have to punt, but Knox will also miss the first half of next week’s matchup against Vanderbilt due to the targeting call against him.

Lost in a disappointing finish was A.J. Brown’s historic day. With his performance on Saturday, the Starkville native eclipsed the 1,000-yard mark again. Also, he became the program’s leader in career receiving yards.

The defensive woes are well documented. The group is completely depleted of any resemblance of depth. This weekend, not only did the defense keep the offense in the game, but the defense was the reason the game was winnable going into the fourth quarter.

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Rebels easily handle Western Michigan 90-64 in opener

GRIFFIN NEAL
THEDMSports@GMAIL.COM

Gliding down the court, not a jersey in front of him, Terence Davis rose up and flushed a two handed slam that officially marked the beginning of the Kermit Davis era of Ole Miss Basketball.

His opening-game dunk was the first two of 17 points he would score en route to a 90-64 victory over Western Michigan on Saturday afternoon at the Pavilion.

Terence Davis, the senior forward picked to the preseason all-SEC second team, led the team with 17 points on 7-12 shooting to go along with two rebounds and three steals.

The win was Coach Davis' first in the red and blue, and despite coaching for more than 32 years in college basketball, tip off still made him nervous.

"It was a new experience today. I had butterflies," Kermit Davis said, with a laugh. "It was a fun, new feeling for me, especially with the start we had."

Ole Miss jumped out to a 15-4 lead, hitting six of their first nine shots including three made threes.

Defensively, they forced eight turnovers in the first four minutes, finishing with 17 forced in the first half. They parlayed the strong defensive production into 24 points off turnovers.

Kermit Davis' squad led 43-22 at halftime.

"I was really pleased with how we played defensively. (WMU) had seven turnovers on their first right possessions," Kermit Davis said. "I thought we played hard, but we played within a concept of



PHOTO: CHRISTIAN JOHNSON

Dominik Olejniczak dunks the ball during Saturday's game versus Western Michigan. Ole Miss beat the Broncos 90-64.

really trying to guard to the scouting plan."

To Davis' point, Ole Miss held Western Michigan's most lethal offensive threat, Seth Dugan, to 10 points and 7 boards on less than 40 percent shooting. For context, Dugan put up 32 points and 22 rebounds in Tuesday's game against Detroit.

Ole Miss opened the game running Coach Davis' patented 1-3-1 defense. They hounded the WMU guards and routinely forced the ball handlers to pick up their dribble near the mid-court line, making any sort of offensive rhythm for Western Michigan

nearly impossible.

After the fifteen minute mark of the first half, the Rebel lead never dipped below 12. Western Michigan opened the second frame on an 8-1 run, prompting Coach Davis to swiftly call a timeout. Seemingly, whatever he conveyed to his team in the huddle worked, because Ole Miss didn't look back; the Rebels won the remaining 17 minutes 46-34.

Ole Miss shot 54 percent from the field, knocking down 10 of 22 three point attempts—good for 46 percent behind the arc. For the most part, the three point makes came later in the shot clock after

the ball had been moved throughout the offense.

Coach Davis trotted out most his bench, playing ten guys in the first half and 12 in total. Ten players put points on the board, with four (Davis, Shuler, Tyree, D.C Davis) hitting double digits.

D.C. Davis, the smaller and less-known of the Davis tandem, scored a career high 12 points on a perfect 4-4 shooting from the floor. A junior college walk-on, D.C. Davis only saw action in five games last season, but a strong offseason and opening game suggest more playing time going forward.

Coach Davis cited D.C.'s intense work ethic as evidence for his success.

"He led most hours in the gym on his own every day," Kermit Davis said. "He's one of our strongest guys and one of our best athletes."

The loftier Davis was happy to see teammate's hard work pay off.

"D.C. is a player — he's been pretty much our best defender in practice," Terence Davis said. "(After the game) I just told him I love him, man. You don't get too many guys around you like him."



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